

Establishing a Strategic Alliance

An Invaluable Addition to the PEO/PM Tool Kit

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Cross is the PEO for Aircraft Carriers, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Crystal City, Va. A 1967 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and Distinguished Graduate of the Naval War College, Cross is qualified as a weapons system acquisition manager and nuclear propulsion engineer. A combat pilot who flew the F-4 Phantom in over 175 combat missions over North Vietnam, Cross was selected for test pilot training in 1972 and subsequently served as a test pilot instructor. His operational assignments include command of a fighter squadron; an amphibious assault ship, the *USS Inchon*; the nuclear aircraft carrier *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower*; Carrier Group Six; and the America Battle Group. He is currently attending the Executive Program Managers Course, DSMC.

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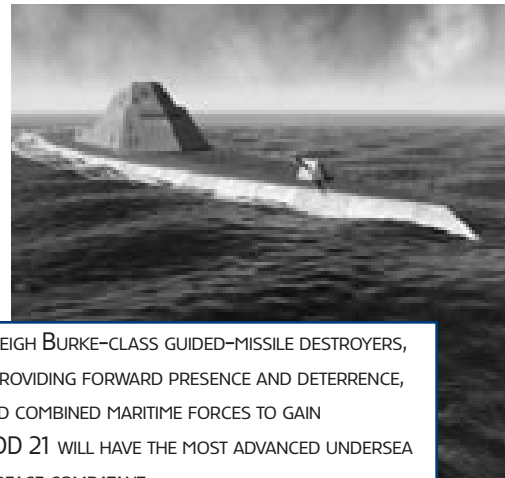
Carnevale is the PEO for DD-21, NAVSEA. Graduating from the University of Massachusetts in 1971, he received his commission through Officer Candidate School at Newport, R.I. After completing deployments to Vietnam and the Sixth Fleet, Carnevale joined the Engineering Duty Officer community. He graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1980 with a master's in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering and an Ocean Engineer's Degree. Carnevale has participated in the acquisition and construction of six ship classes, including Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss., and Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition). He is a graduate of PMC 96-1, DSMC.

The Defense Reform Initiative challenges the acquisition community to become more efficient and effective in providing systems and support for the warfighter. One readily available tool for the Program Executive Officer (PEO) and the Program Manager (PM) is to establish a "strategic alliance" as a means of leveraging scarce resources across programs. The authors – the PEO for Aircraft Carriers and the PEO for DD 21 – have established such an alliance. This article tells how their sharing of ideas and mutual support is producing significant benefits to the U.S. Navy.

Every PEO and PM faces a myriad of challenges and opportunities that often

cut across program lines. As PEO for Aircraft Carriers and PEO for DD-21, we realized through informal discussions that we face many of the same challenges and opportunities.

We also recognize that our resources are limited and that the expectations of our



ARTIST'S CONCEPT OF THE DD-21. LIKE TODAY'S ARLEIGH BURKE-CLASS GUIDED-MISSILE DESTROYERS, DD 21 WILL BE A MULTI-MISSION SHIP, CAPABLE OF PROVIDING FORWARD PRESENCE AND DETERRENCE, AND OPERATING AS A VITAL PART OF NAVAL, JOINT, AND COMBINED MARITIME FORCES TO GAIN BATTLESPACE DOMINANCE IN LITTORAL OPERATIONS. DD 21 WILL HAVE THE MOST ADVANCED UNDERSEA WARFARE COMBAT SYSTEMS EVER INSTALLED ON A SURFACE COMBATANT.
Image courtesy United Defense



ATTENDING THE TWO-DAY STRATEGIC ALLIANCE OFFSITE, HELD AT THE DEFENSE SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT COLLEGE'S STATE-OF-THE-ART MANAGEMENT DELIBERATION CENTER (MDC), FORT BELVOIR, VA., WERE THE PEOs, THEIR RESPECTIVE PMs, SENIOR PEO OFFICERS, AND KEY PROGRAM OFFICE STAFF MEMBERS. SEATED FROM LEFT: NAVY REAR ADM. JOSEPH A. CARNEVALE, PEO FOR DD-21, NAVSEA; NAVY REAR ADM. WILLIAM V. CROSS, PEO FOR AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, NAVSEA.

warfighting customers are high. These realities convinced us to hold a two-day meeting — a Strategic Alliance Offsite we called it — in order to explore the potential for more formal cooperation.

People First

The Defense Systems Affordability Council (DSAC) articulates three top-level goals of the Department in its 1999 study, *Into the 21st Century — A Strategy for Affordability*: fielding quality systems quickly and supporting them responsively, lowering Total Ownership Cost (TOC), and reducing the overhead costs of the acquisition and logistics infrastructure.¹ Each PEO and PM is responsible for these goals within their respective purview.

In this regard, we believe much may be gained not only by collaborating on processes and products, but also by sharing the ideas and knowledge of the people in each organization.

We found that comprehensive, up-front planning was absolutely critical to the

Those attending our offsite were the PEOs, their respective PMs, senior PEO officers, and key Program Office staff members. We were extremely fortunate in our choice of locations — the state-of-the-art, computer-aided Management Deliberation Center (MDC) at the Defense Systems Management College (DSMC), Fort Belvoir, Va. We also received first-rate support from DSMC's former Commandant, Navy Rear Adm. Leonard Vincent and the college faculty, whose management expertise and familiarization with the MDC were essential to our proceedings.

Once we assembled the right people, booked the superb MDC facility, and arranged for support of our efforts, we were ready for the first day. Day 1 began with short remarks about each other's expectations and why we felt the offsite was important to our future success. The bulk of the offsite featured both combined briefings and small group meetings, offering the PEO staffs the opportunity to meet independently and resolve "in house" concerns. Initial presenta-

nated briefings in specific technical and business areas that held the most promise for mutual benefit. These included the use of the Integrated Data Environment (IDE); acquisition strategy and acquisition reform; Combat Systems Integration issues; TOC reduction; Smart Ship initiatives to reduce workload levels; Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) initiatives; and the leveraging of research and development efforts.

Formalizing Our Commitment

As a culmination of our strategic alliance offsite, we formalized our commitment in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), which articulated the purpose, scope, background, responsibilities, schedule, and agreed-upon focus areas. Prior to the offsite, we drafted and reviewed the MOA, then made final modifications online, using the unique computing capabilities of the MDC. Signed by each PEO, this MOA is the charter document for our future efforts.²

Our newly formed Strategic Alliance, now recognized by the Chief of Naval Operations, establishes a new high-water mark for PEO-to-PEO relationships in general, and between the surface combatant and aircraft carrier acquisition communities in particular. The alliance gives each PEO another "tool in the tool kit" for effectively leading these important efforts. We have great expectations that this key undertaking will produce significant benefits to the Navy — in terms of cost savings as well as improved warfighting capability — for years to come!

REFERENCES

1. DSAC Study on DoD Business Practice Goals, *Into the 21st Century — A Strategy for Affordability*, Jan. 20, 1999. To download the entire study, go to <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/affordability04091999.html> on the Defenselink Web site.
2. Memorandum of Agreement between PEO, Aircraft Carriers and PEO, DD21, "Establishment of Strategic Alliance Between PEO Carriers and PEO DD 21," March 23, 1999.



USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73)

success of our cooperative effort. It established mutual expectations, ensured our time was spent productively, and allowed our senior staff members the opportunity to get to know each other prior to meeting together for the first time.

tions included general program overviews intended to establish mutual understanding.

As part of their extensive preliminary work, our staffs identified and coordi-